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ABSTRACT

Africa's educational systems were developed by colonial and missionary authorities as a means to create a trained labor force with respect for European social and moral superiority. With independence, African nations were faced with selecting new objectives for their educational systems. Among the educational aims emerging are fostering national unity, preserving traditional culture, and, most importantly, developing the national economy. The attempt to meet these goals brings curriculum planners face to face with several specific problems: high drop-out rates, low employment, a conditioned bias against agricultural and technical education, a lack of qualified teachers, limited educational facilities, unequal educational opportunities for women, adult educational needs, inadequate pre-primary programs, the lack of an adequate language of instruction, and unstable economic conditions. (Author/PGD)

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AFRICAN EDUCATION:

NEW STRATEGIES IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

By

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1979

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PREFACE

During 1978 the United Nations organized an "Anti-apartheid Year" to express its commitment to racial and social justice in southern Africa. In recognition of this program, the World Education Project - The Center for Bilingual, Multicultural, International and Global Education at The University of Connecticut - collaborated with the Afro-American Cultural Center and the Center for Black Studies to sponsor a special colloquium. The speaker was Dr. David E.M. Panyako, Assistant Professor of Education at Barber-Scotia College, Concord, North Carolina. Dr. Panyako directs the International Curriculum Development Program at Barber-Scotia College and edits its Journal of International Heritage. We are pleased that his presentation on "African Education: New Strategies in Curriculum Development" will lead off the 1979 World Education Monograph Series. The second title for 1979 is "The Social Functions of Iranian Education: An Historical Survey Related to the Current Political Crisis" by David C. Woolman.

David Panyako grew up in Kenya and was graduated from Kijabe Teachers College there. He has taught in Kenyan primary schools, the Njoro Catholic School and the Kijabe Teachers College. He later studied at Goshen College and Eastern Kentucky University, and earned his Ph.D. in Adult, Community and Early Childhood Education at Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana. Dr. Panyako is currently Associate Editor of African Directions, a quarterly journal. We invite your reactions and comments regarding the 1979 World Education Monographs and hope that you will find them useful.

Frank Andrews Stone, Director
Patricia S. Weibust, Associate Director
Sally I. Gould, Research Assistant

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AFRICAN EDUCATION
NEW STRATEGIES IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

Even though most of Africa has been independent for several decades now, African societies are, until this moment, engaged in a reconstruction process involving the rebuilding of structures that are a legacy of the former colonial establishments. Education has been the major instrument and medium used in this reconstruction process. The use of education as an instrument for effecting change has not been altogether new in the African societies. Beginning with the early European penetration of the African continent, the Western influence exerted pressures on the indigenous African communities and their educational patterns, causing major changes in the nature, content and purpose of traditional African education, in order to serve the interests of the alien forces. These forces (Christian missions, colonists and settlers) soon established schools to give compulsory religious instruction and technical training. They had recognized formal education as a desirable medium for the transmission of Christianity and Western influence. But as the African participation in Western education increased, so did the inspiration to acquire the new education for use as a springboard to "learning the ways and mentality of the colonial establishment" which might enable them to draw strategies to free themselves from this colonial domination. Consequently, as we observe the patterns of the early establishment of European education in Africa, it becomes evident that both the colonists and the native peoples recognized the crucial importance of education. Each of the two groups scrambled to gain control of the educational institution, perceiving in education the spearhead of economic, political and social progress. For instance, while the Africans sought to use education to unite the African masses in their struggle against the colonial invasion, the colonists, on the other hand, were interested primarily in creating a "skilled labor force," as well as a "proper respect" for European law and order. It is this equally determined divergence in interests between the two groups that one writer has termed, "the struggle for the school."[1]

II. AFRICANIZATION OF THE CURRICULUM

The single most important strategy in educational development in independent Africa has been the indigenizing of the curriculum, in which the major emphasis has been the restoration of the local traditional values. Africanization of the curriculum has generally represented the concrete visible break, by Africans, from their colonial past, as well as providing a

needed response to the theme pervasive in colonial education--the "tabula raza approach" by Europeans to the African, resulting in curriculum courses designed to deliberately fit the supposed inferiority of black people--an approach which not only carried a racial stigma, but one which generally alienated Africans from their traditional values.[2] Chris Wanjala of the University of Nairobi, commenting on a variety of ways in which local African values were undermined by the colonial structures writes:

> . . . the colonizer sought to alienate man from his environment by bringing an education that highlighted worldviews that are too foreign to be of any use (in Africa) . . . Victorian scientists sought to establish that the cranial capacity of the African was decidedly smaller than that of the white man . . . These views emphasized "training" rather than "educating" the black man . . . Thus whichever European came to Africa saw himself coming from a superior race in the material and in the spiritual sense. . . to eradicate religious beliefs and rituals which they considered evil aberrations, (bringing about) eradication of African beliefs, rituals, values, rites and customs. . .[3]

A second reason for emphasis on Africanization in education was the inheritance, at independence, of an educational system highly stratified on racial lines. During the colonial period, education was organized separately for each of the three multi-racial population groups: Europeans, Asians, and Africans, in that order. European education always received the best, and most, of the educational resources, with Asian education receiving the second-level attention. African education always came into consideration at a distant third-level of consideration, if any consideration at all. All things unequal, as they were, what this line of racial stratification did not address appropriately was the fact that the content of the African education was in every way, everything but African. For one thing, it generally led to occupations of rural life and the lowest levels of the public administration.

This explains the bitter struggle for the school discussed in the previous section. Which side ultimately won the struggle to control the school is a matter for continued debate. However, the results of the contest between Europeans and Africans to control education might be viewed by examining the classic confrontation between the Church of Scotland and the Kikuyu tribe of central Kenya. In this conflict, the two main issues involved were polygamy and female circumcision. While the Church of Scotland viewed the African practice in these two instances as "pagan" and cruel, the Kikuyu regarded these customs as vital ways to achieve womanhood and citizenship.[4] With no compromise between the two sides, the controversy led to the 1929 break-away that created the establishment, in that year, of the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association (KISA). The schools offered a much needed relief to the Kikuyu by providing European education without the vigorous religious instruction of the missions.

III. AIMS OF EDUCATION

Daniel Sifuna, writing elsewhere,[5] points out that, like any other countries in the world, independent African nations have each developed a political philosophy to influence the aims of education, and thus form the basis for the kind of society to be established. An example of a clearly stated political philosophy is the Tanzanian principle of Education for Self-Reliance, as espoused by Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere. Shortly after Independence in 1961, the Tanzanian leaders declared the creation of a socialist society based on three principles: equality and respect for human dignity; sharing of the resources produced through cooperative efforts of the people; work by everyone and exploitation by none.

As Sifuna has pointed out, the determination of a political philosophy is essential in providing direction to educational development. In Tanzania, the importance of this determination was expressed by President Nyerere when he said, "Only when we are clear about the kind of society we are trying to build can we design our educational service to serve our goals."[6] Tanzania's philosophy, commonly known as Ujamaa (Familyhood) attempts to foster social goals of living and working together, as well as group commitment to the total community. In accordance with the goals of Ujamaa, the new Tanzanian Government took the following three steps shortly after independence. First, the racial distinctions within the old colonial educational structure were abolished, replaced by integration of the separate racial systems. Secondly, secondary education facilities were greatly expanded to provide increased opportunities for post-primary education. The third action taken was Africanizing the curriculum by making education "more Tanzanian in content." As President Nyerere has written, "No longer do our children simply learn British and European History. . . our institutions are providing materials on the history of Africa and making these available to our teachers."[7] Traditional songs and the nationally spoken language, Ki-Swahili, have been among items given importance in the curriculum, as well as the political education and awareness of the masses of the people.

Consideration of educational aims has, rightly, occupied the attention of independent African states. In Kenya, the attainment of independence in 1963 was quickly followed by the Government-appointed Kenya Education Commission of 1964 whose assignment was to reassess and chart the role of education in the new nation. The Commission's inquiry yielded several objectives in education, among them: (1) to foster nationhood and promote unity, (2) to serve the needs of the people without discrimination, and (3) to respect the cultural traditions of the people. The Kenya Government Sessional Paper No. 10, as well as other Government commissions of inquiry have repeatedly made mention of political

equality, social justice and respect for cultural traditions, among the objectives the nation will attempt to fulfill. Charting the course for the future has,of necessity, become a key priority in African states. This priority can be observed in the national aims of education, as reflected in virtually every curriculum development plan. The three aims discussed below have been among the top concerns in the new curriculum development efforts across the continent.

One key aim the African schools are called upon to help meet is National Unity. There are several reasons why educational institutions in Africa must assist in the task of bringing about national unity. For one thing, there are many potentially divisive elements and influences in each nation. There are many tribal groupings, each with its own separate language and culture. In Kenya, the 50 tribal groups that make up that country's 14.5 million population roughly represent that many languages. In Tanzania the tribal groups number approximately 120. Divisions along tribal lines have been evident thus far in varying degrees, ranging from the widespread divergent political opinions stemming primarily from ethnic power struggle, to full-fledged open warfare, such as was witnessed in the regional Biafra-Nigerian civil war of the late 1960's. There is no doubt, however, that the seeds of many of the potentially divisive elements were planted in the colonial administrative structure. In the Berlin-based "partition of Africa" conventions of the mid-1800's, the European nations summarily divided up Africa for colonial holdings, often placing arbitrary boundaries in the midst of, and dividing up members of the same tribe. In the meantime, colonial rule and education, based on the principle of "divide and conquer," created competitive and divisive attitudes between and among the African people so that they might not unite, lest they become wise and threaten to liberate themselves from the alien domination.

The task the modern African school is charged with, therefore, is the development of a curriculum which will foster national unity, by stressing cooperation as well as teaching youngsters to exercise individual freedoms to make choices while simultaneously learning to accept responsibility. Teaching youngsters to acquire skills for independent thinking is among the aspects of education the colonial administrations placed severe limitations upon. Fortunately, the emphasis on the development of national unity by independent African nations indicates the recognition by these states that national unity is an essential element for the security of African nationhood.

A second important aim in African education is the Preservation of Traditional Cultures. A common criticism of colonial education, already discussed in an earlier portion of this paper, was the complete disregard and destruction of indigenous African customs, traditions and values, including religious beliefs. The most important task of the school

should be to teach young people to develop respect for their cultural traditions, while at the same time learning to accept and appreciate the cultural lifestyles of other people. This is no easy task for curriculum planners, for it presents the added challenge of developing multi-culturalism as well as nationalism and internationalism, all the while promoting pride in the local tribal and community traditions. The magnitude of the challenge embodied in such an undertaking should, nevertheless, be met head-on. Any alternatives available would not be in the best interests of true African freedom. Addressing his remarks to this challenge, Sifuna writes:

> . . . If education has to cater for the retention of the African culture, it has to teach pupils to perform the most difficult task of standing with one foot in the past and the other in the future and still feel comfortable in the precarious present . . .[8]

Concerning the curriculum appraoch taken in Tanzania, President Nyerere has said:

> . . . at present our pupils learn to despise even their own parents because they are old-fashioned and ignorant; there is nothing in our existing educational system which suggests to the pupil that he can learn important things about farming from his elders. The result is that he absorbs beliefs about witchcraft before he goes to school, but he does not learn the properties of local grasses; he absorbs the taboos from his family but does not learn the methods of making nutritious traditional foods. . . He gets the worst of both systems![9]

The third and most important major area of curriculum concern in Africa is Economic Development. The development of a viable education system depends upon the creation of a support system based on the nation's economy. Otherwise it would not be possible to meet the cost of education at the level necessary to break through poverty and improve the quality of living for the people. Educational improvement and economic development are the two critical elements that present the most difficult dilemma for African leaders today. It is a vicious circle, for, where does development begin? Do you begin by developing an economic system to enable you to improve education? Or do you first establish an educational system to prepare the needed human resources for developing the vital economic support system? Experience in African development thus far indicates that the question becomes totally irrelevant the moment it refers to "either-or" of these two elements. The answer is that both the economy and the education system must be addressed simultaneously. Both complement each other, and neither can afford to be placed on a standstill while the other is readied. Therefore discussions of African educational development must really go hand-in-hand with an analysis of the economic status and potential of the nation. The key to the success of the African education development depends on the degree to which the economic capacity of the nation is able to support educational efforts, and vice-versa. Education does not take place in a vacuum. There must

be available financial material and human resources to enable its development. Conversely, in order to develop a viable economic system, there must be available trained human resources as well as the availability of technical apparatus to help bring about such development. The task needs a cooperative venture between educational agencies and government.

Agriculture is the economic backbone of most of the African nations. The success of educational efforts in these nations depends on the level of agricultural development. This development, in turn, depends on "bringing an increasing number of small farmers into a modern and productive economy," through a programme of land redistribution and settlement, improvement of access roads, the encouragement of local processing industries, and increase in the quality and quantity of cash crops. (In short,) an agrarian revolution.[10]

The task of developing agriculture would be simplified, if it were not for the fact that this is only where the real problem of development begins. The main problem here is the negative attitude held in both school and society at large concerning agriculture and any other forms of manual work. The African resistance toward agriculture is rooted in the colonial background and the influences and impositions these early experiences exerted on the African people.

A post World War I example from Kenya indicates that at that time, European settlers, faced with a shortage of farm labor, convinced the then newly arrived British Governor Edward Northey to "authorize officials to exercise lawful influence to induce all able bodied natives to enter the labor field." The celebrated remarks of the governor's predecessor, made in 1917 are worth noting here:

> . . . It cannot be too widely known that it is the declared policy of the Governor to give fullest encouragement to settlers and natives alike to arrange for the introduction and maintenance on farms of a supply of labor sufficient to meet the varying requirements of different proprietors. If any impression exists that the legitimate requirements of the former are to be subordinated to the policy of confining the native to his reserve, I trust that these words will be sufficient to dispell that impression. I am prepared to state definitely that we desire to make of the native a useful citizen, and that we consider the best means of doing so is to induce him to work for a period of his life for the European.[12]

The above sentiment was widely shared by the settler community in Kenya, which had always looked forward to creating self-government, and whose main objective was to "found a white colony." Governor Northey went ahead and gave authorization for the settlers' use of forced African labor, a move which missionary leaders and other humanitarianists angrily deplored, particularly the use of government officers as recruiting

agents for the European farmers. Because of unrelenting missionary pressure on behalf of the Africans, the British Colonial Secretary issued a White Paper in 1923 stating that whenever the interests of the Africans and that of the immigrant races conflicted, the farmer should prevail.

The creation of negative attitudes toward manual work among students in African schools has also been helped in recent post-independence periods by the official encouragement and emphasis on the development of "high-level manpower," such as was espoused at the 1961 Addis Ababa Conference of African States. Even though the initial motives for this program were good and of valid intentions (i.e. to train Africans to fill high government positions vacated by outgoing members of the colonial government), the program solved one problem but also created a new one. White-collar job attitudes became imbedded in the minds of most youngsters and their parents. This problem has been the main concern of the Nigerian educator, G.N.I. Enobakhare, as he writes and asks the fundamental question, "How shall we educate?" He deplores the popular practice, stating:

> . . . It is a notorious fact that until very recently our secondary level institutions have concentrated on the type of education that fitted men and women largely for office work. Of the education that teaches the use of hands to make and create things, they have known very little. The result has been an almost pathological reaction against manual work . . . For a country whose economy is based mainly on agriculture, such an attitude borders on sheer self-neglect. . . [13]

The late Kenyan political leader Tom Mboya reflected on the pattern that causes students to acquire the white-collar job attitude. He noted:

> . . . On speech days, in every school or college, the visitor or the headmaster tells the young and keen listeners, "You are the leaders of tomorrow." They are told that the education they get is to prepare them for leadership—although perhaps the emphasis should be on service rather than leadership.[14]

Mboya went on to warn of the dangers inherent in such an educational system, pointing out that this trend could result in student high expectation of self-worth in "market value," and the creation of an "elite class," two ingredients which could induce instability in the country.

Given these odds which the African school must face, there is no doubt whatsoever as to the number one priority of the educational leaders, teachers and the national and local governments. They all must persuade the young generation of school-goers to take up farming. As Sifuna has said, the aims of education, particularly at the beginning levels, must be to transmit the necessary information and postitive attitudes which will convince them that in farming "they can make money and enjoy a reasonable

standard of living."[15] Accompanying this noble task, however, must be the actual development of skills and competencies in a genuine agricultural education. A practical beginning point for this implementation might be the linkage of the school and the local community's economic structure, centering on the improvement of the local economy, which must in turn support the educational efforts of the school and related social service agencies. The content of the curriculum should reflect the goals of improved agricultural productivity in quantity and quality, as well as the scientific and "white collar" opportunities available in the agricultural and related fields. The major benefits of a successful education program of this kind should be at least two-fold: the new agricultural output would create financial and other support for education, in addition to providing adequate food supply for the nation. In addition, the expanded industry should greatly help alleviate the high unemployment caused by, but not limited to, school leavers at all levels who can find neither employment nor opportunities for further study.

What are some practical ways in which the school might be of service to the local community? Classroom-related projects might be designed, ranging from a discussion of the advantages of improved seeds and the use of fertilizers, terracing and soil conservation methods, to simple construction work, literacy and the transmission of vital information on health care, child care and the enhancement of personal and national citizen roles for active participation in the political, economic and social life of the nation. There is more that can be done, but the first step is for the official curriculum of the school to reflect practical, community-related subjects.

A quiet, but nevertheless curious debate which has intensified over the last several decades in African education arises from the otherwise well intended development of agricultural and other forms of vocational and technical education. Given the current attitudes concerning agricultural and manual work, it might be anticipated that any new form of vocational or other "alternative" education programs will likely bring about political, social and economic controversies, if not difficulties. This might come about, for instance, if certain members of the population felt that their children were receiving an "inferior" education emphasizing manual work, while children from the middle and upper classes were perceived as receiving a "superior" education which might place them in preferred positions of economic, social and political superiority while keeping the poor in a "subservient" status. Even though one would wish the likelihood of such a situation to remain mere speculation, the past colonial experience of Governor Northey and the settler community's force of Africans into the manual labor field indicates the strong opposition such attempts could face. The colonial "plantation economy" has already been discussed along with its principle emphasis on the supply of unskilled agricultural workers and its non-academic nature.

The debate arising from the conditions described above boil down to the fundamental question, "Which pupils should receive academic education, and which ones should receive vocational education?" Is vocational education inferior to academic education? Is it an entrapment of training for subservience? These are among the hard questions that must be addressed squarely, and in a satisfactory manner, if the masses of the people will be convinced as to the economic prospects and personal satisfaction of a non-traditional academic program. Already the vast majority of the people seem to be convinced the other way around: that only in academic education can the benefits of one's "market value" be achieved. These fears seem to be confirmed by the results of a recent study which found that of the Kenyan parents surveyed, 97% wanted secondary education for their children,[16] a sad statistic considering that of all primary school leavers, only approximately 25% are able to secure post-primary education opportunities.

From the other end of the spectrum of this debate are the proponents, such as David Court, who argue that, considering the current rates of unemployment of the primary school leavers, that vocational and other alternative forms of education offer the advantage of providing low-cost post-primary training.[17]

One common weakness of the argument concerning academic versus vocational education is that often times, the people on both sides of the argument seem to overlook the possibility that vocational education could be designed to serve the academically talented students as well as it supposedly serves the less academically talented ones. In this regard, the argument seems fallacious, since the real issue should become one of the personal choice of the individual pupils and their parents to select which of the two program directions to pursue, rather than a decision made and imposed arbitrarily based on external criteria. Perhaps even a more viable appraoch might be for the new curriculum to offer both types of education (academic and vocational) to all students. Such an approach might result in a more effective talent-oriented education program for new emerging nations which need both types of education as a necessary prerequisite for a complete program of nation-building and reconstruction.

IV. PROBLEM AREAS AND CURRICULUM STRATEGIES

The preceeding sections of this paper have covered, in a comprehensive way, problems faced in educational development in Africa. This is an appropraite time therefore to attempt to isolated specific problems and issues for which curriculum planners must design strategies to deal effectively with the challenge of educational development. Ten such specific problem areas will be discussed, each as briefly as possible.

1. Wastage, or attrition, is a recurrent problem which has haunted educational efforts in Africa since the beginning of formal learning in the colonial times. Wastage is a

term commonly used which refers to the fall-out of children who begin school in the first grade but who, for one reason or another, do not continue to complete their education.[18] Several factors contribute to this condition, among them: parental inability to pay school fees and other financial constraints in the family. The major cause of attrition, however, seems to be the stringent systems of selective examinations which students must take annually and periodically in their programs to determine who and how many students will continue to the next class or educational level the following year. The yearly comprehensive examinations at the end of the primary education determine which students will be permitted to enter secondary school.

One obvious necessity for the examination systems in developing nations is that they make it possible for the educational authorities to plan an educational program for the youth in correspondence with available educational facilities—human, financial and material. An important by-product of this system is that the built-in competition for the limited available places in education brings about the highest quality education among the few that are able to survive the examinations. But no matter what might be said in favor of the examination systems, in the end one must contend with the alarming figures of the students who are not able to survive the examinations and who, lacking wage employment and constructive outlets, become burdensome to the society. The figures have been particularly alarming at the primary school level, 75% of whose graduates were unable to secure any form of post-primary education or wage employment in 1976. Commenting on the situation in Kenya at the time of independence in 1963, Clarke Trundle[19] noted that of the 65,000 students who took the end-of-primary education examination, only 5,000 could be accommodated in secondary education facilities. The year following independence, 1964, while the number of students taking a similar examination almost doubled at 122,000, only 6,000 secondary school places were available. Most of those who are unable to find entry into post-primary schools migrate to the urban areas, thereby compounding the already deteriorated unemployment, crime and poverty conditions, not to speak of their personal dissolutionment, dissatisfaction, both of which could be potential forces for social and political instability.

Luckily, however, many of the African nations have managed to develop successful alternative education programs to provide the safety-valves needed for a stable development. These have included informal, practical education programs with strong bases in rural areas, as well as provision of expanded formal secondary and higher educational facilities. Inadequate or slow provision of government schools have in many places prompted community groups to pool their resources and to build their own self-help institutions, known in Kenya as Harambee schools.

2. The second problem, the Unemployment of School Leavers, has been discussed. A key strategy to the alleviation of this problem must lie in the exploration and development of the nation's agricultural sector of the economy, particularly in the vast unexplored rural areas. The tapping of the resources in such areas will not only generate employment for the youth, but it will also make possible in these regions the provision of essential educational and other social services. To generate a high level of performance as described above will no doubt call for an unprecedented cooperative venture among all available agencies: government, private industry, individual citizen efforts, and last but not least, the school. The economic output generated from these efforts should have the capacity to support the national education plans.

3. Attitudes Toward Agricultural and Technical Education: A discussion of this problem has been presented in preceeding sections, focusing primarily on factors that have caused many students to take the attitude that their education entitles them to something better than village life. These attitudes, we have seen, originated from the colonial education systems which were based upon forced African labor and which have persisted through several decades of independence, fueled by the post-independence ethnic and political positions. The resulting "white-collar syndrome" has brought into focus the debate over whether vocational or academic education should be emphasized in school. There seems to be no doubt, however, that provision of both types of education is needed in developing nations. There is also little doubt that technical institutions would provide unique possibilities for an education while at the same time contributing directly to nation-building, as well as relieving the unemployment problem through skills acquisition.

4. Teacher Education: A major problem in African educational development has been the lack of sufficient numbers of qualified teachers in the schools. Currently, nearly 40% of the teachers are untrained. The problem is especially acute at the primary school level. The low proportion of qualified teachers must greatly affect not only the quality of instruction but also the individual teacher's capability to design and/or to implement program curriculum. It is for these reasons that the professional competence of teachers has been a major concern in modern Africa. What is needed to supplement current improvement efforts is a stepped-up program of in-service teacher education while long-term measures are implemented to remedy the situation. In the meantime, the Africanization programs will probably leave some room for qualified teachers from other nations to relieve the shortage of the teaching personnel in many of the developing nations.

5. Limited Educational Facilities: At the time of independence, many African nations inherited primarily one type of school--Government Schools. Because these schools were severely limited in number, only so many African students could find educational

opportunities, particularly in the then racially-stratified school systems. Since independence, however, this situation has been greatly improved, even though the number of students enrolled in school in post-independence years has increased correspondingly. Nevertheless, two new types of schools have emerged: The Self-Help (Harambee) programs have been the creation of local community self-help projects as a way to increase the children's opportunities for higher education. Alternative education programs, on the other hand, have come about as a result of government and/or other educational agency-initiated innovative ideas for expanding educational facilities and for creating rural development projects to provide social services as well as employment opportunities.

6. Educational Opportunities for Women: Despite governmental and other efforts to develop educational opportunities for women, there is a serious problem of neglect in educating girls and young women in many African countries. Even though the majority of the people are sending their children to school, many tribal groups (particularly the nomadic people who migrate regularly) are not only still resistant to formal Western education, but are specifically hesitant to send their daughters to school. This is primarily based on traditional lifestyles which call upon girls at an early age to take up tribal initiations and other forms of training in preparation for womanhood and full participation in their future communities. Because most of the indigenous African education systems are based on oral tradition and practical instruction and work, the physical presence of the children inhibits greatly their participation in the formal education programs outside of their home-based "schools." Due to the low economic status of many families, parents often will hold on to the services their children can offer in the home for as long as possible. Others, who calculate that their daughters will eventually get married and leave the homestead, give up on the idea of spending valuable financial and other resources with no visible avenues for compensation presently or in the future.

Fortunately, two trends have been in progress which will eventually create a significant impact on the education of women in Africa. The first trend, created by the changing economic structure of the African societies, involves the move from a subsistance economy to the modern cash economy. With the rising standard and cost of living, many families are beginning to see that all the members of the family have to contribute to the efforts to "keep bread on the table." Formal education being identified with a higher earning power, more and more parents are encouraging their daughters to go to school.

The second trend which is helping turn the trend in the education of women is that as more women acquire education and national and local leadership positions, many young girls begin to see role-models with whom they can identify and emulate. The inspiration gained by these young girls and their parents offers a new world of opportunities to aspire for.

African nations which must mobilize their total human resources for national development will not afford to keep large segments of their pupulations from participating in and contributing to the economic growth of the nations simply on the basis of sexual stereotypes. Vigorous efforts must be made to enroll all children in school and to educate them equally.

7. Adult Participation in National Development: Most African countries have illiteracy rates of 80% and above. With the relatively recent attainment of independence by most of those states, and given their traditional systems of oral history, it is no wonder that the problem of illiteracy will continue to be felt for a long time to come. But despite this understandable condition, there is nevertheless the realization all over Africa that the success of adult education is as crucial as the present need to educate the youth.

In realization of this fact, the Second World Conference on Adult Education held in Montreal, Canada in 1960 called on all governments in the developing nations to make adult education an integral part of their national systems of education and of economic development programs.[20] A similar call was made in a 1964 UNESCO report when by stating that it is not really the children of today who hold the destiny of Africa in their hands but rather it is the adults,[21] adding that Africa cannot wait a generation to mobilize its rich human resources for the tasks of national development.

There are many ways in which the school curriculum can play a significant role in the education of adults and hence their active participation in national development.[22] To begin with, the school curriculum must relate to the life of the community in which the school is located. By offering its facilities and resources for adult literacy programs and as a center for community development projects, the school could play a vital part in the improvement of community life and increased economic productivity. Adult education programs, however, must go beyond literacy exercises. They must be practical and of such design as to assist the peasant farmers with new ideas for increased agricultural production, increased communication skills through the written word, as well as provision of political education for a more intelligent participation in the life of the nation. Not only would such programs be of personal national value, but they would also contribute to increased parental participation in the education programs of their children. Otherwise, large portions of the adult population in Africa will continue to represent a valuable, but untapped resource.

8. Pre-Primary Education: The lack of adequate preschool programs in the educational systems of African nations represents a major problem awaiting action by each country. Because of this inadequacy, many children fail to receive appropriate educational background needed for maximum preparation and participation in school programs. Through preschool programs, it is possible for a nation to reduce certain common inadequacies, such

as in food and health care, the problem of malnutrition and disease, and the high infant mortality. Early identification of possible problems and prospects for physical, mental and intellectual growth would also be added advantages, not to speak of the release time such programs would provide mothers who might then be able to increase their participation in the economic life of the family or the community.

9. The Medium of Instruction: The multiplicity of languages in African societies has been discussed in the beginning sections of this paper. The numerous tribal groupings, each with its own separate language, as well as the multi-racial nature of the African nations all present a major dilemma in curriculum design. The key issue is: What language should be used as the medium of instruction in school? Should it be English or any of the other European languages, or a multitude of any of the native languages? If a European language should be selected as the medium of instruction, how early in a child's life should it be used? Is it fair and proper to substitute a child's mother tongue for a foreign one? If any of the African languages shoudl be selected, which one would it be and what special characteristics would qualify it over the others? Would there be sufficient literature available in that language to facilitate international communications?

The above questions reflect the complicated position many African states have had to face in selecting an appropriate and workable medium of instruction for the school. It has not by any means been an easy task. The selection of European languages has in many cases prevailed (English and French, depending upon the country's colonial influence) based on the convenience of the already existing literature materials and international communications requirements. While this has been widely acceptable across the African continent, there are nevertheless the salient issues which refuse to go away. One of them is: When students have to acquire their education in a foreign tongue, what conscious and subconscious attitudes do they form about their mother tongue? About their culture? Or will they be sophisticated enough to use the foreign language as the tool to use in unlocking vital traditional African cultural heritage?

While a few nations, like Tanzania, have ventured out to adopt as the national lingua franca such long developed local-based languages as Ki-Swahili, others, such as Kenya, have elected to take the "middle-of-the-road" approach where, in this case, Ki-Swahili and English are officially recognized equally. In such cases, there is no doubt that the nations involved are attempting, as best they can, to meet practical needs of the nation while at the same time meeting their program requirements for Africanization.

10. Economic Restraints: The economic restrainsts facing African nations as they attempt to develop educational programs has been covered in the discussions concerning the needed increased agricultural education and production. Two items need to be added here. The first is that inspite of the limited facilities in educational programs, the

reality is that African nations are stretching their financial resources to develop and support education. Most of these nations are spending in upwards of 24% of their entire national budgets on education developments alone. If for nothing else, such expenditure is a clear indication of the extraordinary commitment these nations are making to promote educational development for their people.

The second item worth taking note of is the delicate balance that exists between the educational growth of African nations and agriculture. Adverse weather, or a drop in the price of the primary production crops on the world markets can considerably affect the economy, hence the education. Rapidly increasing populations and fewer food and other economic resources pose constant threats to this delicate balance and to educational stability. For this reason, the development of a healthy economic system must be the first priority of the government and educational curriculum planners, and vice versa.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Even though impressive gains have been made in African education since independence, there are constant reminders of the task that has yet to be tackled in the provision of expanded, quality education. As the late Tom Mboya noted, Africa is today a continent going through multiple transitions--all simultaneously: from colonialism to independence; from illiteracy to literacy; from subsistence agriculture to a modern monetary economy; from tribal rural life to a new urban cosmopolitan life; and from traditional tribal customs to Christianity and new attitudes to women and youth.

Daniel Sifuna categorizes the ideas expressed above into what he sees as three major revolutions he says Africa is experiencing: the social, economic and political revolutions. He points out that the the total impact of these revolutions is causing Africa to face in one generation the equivalent of the social, agrarian and political changes which, in Europe, were spread over centuries.

Yet, as appropriately noted by Mboya, there is no probationary period for a newly independent state. The urgent needs of the people cannot wait, he adds, referring to this urgency as "the crisis of confidence."

If there is a single African institution charged with the responsibility of resolving this crisis of confidence, that institution is the school, whose curriculum must reflect the changing needs, conditions and requirements of the nation. The crucial task in African education today is the development of new curriculum strategies and alternative school programs that will bring about improvement in the quality of life for the people.

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